

# His art is his life

By David Thiemann

His dad once told him, "Do the best you can at whatever you do. Then do a little bit more and you'll always have a job." He certainly has taken heed of his father's advice for his job is his art and according to D. Omer "Salty" Seamon—"My art is my life."

Anyone familiar with Salty Seamon's watercolor landscapes knows quite well that Salty's penchant for detail has always emphasized quality over quantity. Salty's skill in all phases of the graphic arts has not only kept him in work but has allowed him to operate quite successfully as a freelance artist and watercolorist.

Renowned as a watercolorist, Salty is affiliated with the Brown County Art Gallery Association, the Hoosier Salon, the Swope Art Gallery and the Indiana Artists.

The need of peacefulness and inner calm that is so much a part of the rolling, forested hills of Indiana seem to be inevitably captured by Salty's brush time and time again. In fact, the tranquility and serenity that are so characteristic of Salty's work are but a mirror image of the man himself.

Says Salty, "Everything I paint is a place I've seen or been. You begin to paint as much of what you know, as what you see."

Bound by his affection for nature, Salty has lived in the woods along the Parke County line since 1935, where in his personally-designed and built home and studio, he has captured the changing seasons in Indiana with a passion for detail and realism that is refreshingly down to earth.

While visiting with Salty and his wife, Polly, at his studio retreat in the woods, I became immediately aware that he indeed loves his work. His enthusiasm and effervescence about his work rivaled that of a child preparing to witness his first major league baseball game. This enthusiasm coupled with his ability to work long concentrated hours has enabled Salty to become a master of his art.

His studio serves not only as a retreat to concentrate on his work, but as a small gallery and a carpentershop as well. The cabinetry and carpentry work that fill his studio for utilitarian purposes show every bit as much attention to detail and exactness that his paintings do. He is also a fine sculptor, working occasionally with soft clay. In addition, he has files filled with creative photography to which he constantly refers for purposes of authenticity in painting his Indiana landscapes.

The man, while a master of his art, remains humble and appreciative of his clientele. Anyone who has witnessed his watercolor demonstrations knows of his charming wit and humor.

For relaxation he admits to enjoying old westerns, poring over over a National Geographic magazine or working with wood.

Like most people who live their work, Salty admits to there not being enough hours in the day to get everything done that he would like to do. "Most people are looking for a 40-hour week. I'm looking for a 40-hour day."



Photo by American Visuals

*Salty Seamon works in his studio north of Terre Haute. His studio, like his water colors, are carefully crafted and painstakingly detailed.*

## Salty strives for authenticity

For Omer "Salty" Seamon, the Forrest Sherer Christmas card project has been particularly satisfying.

"I am very interested in history and this gives me an opportunity to go back and research history of old buildings and events," Salty says.

He is particularly interested in authentic detail and tries to be sure that all the touches are exactly right. For example, a future painting of the Terre Haute House includes a double decker street car rounding the corner at Seventh and Wabash.

"As far as I know, there was only one here and it was purchased in 1904," Salty says. He even has the correct number of the streetcar.

While he strives for authenticity, no one protests. "Very few can remember," he laughs.

"Mr. Sherer has given me a free hand, except for the selection of the scenes, and it has been very enjoyable," he says.

He tries to pick a period when the particular building or happening was at its zenith. With the Grand Opera House, for example, it would have been in the early 1900s. The Preston Home took several drafts, since it was necessary to get the appropriate country "look." When it was built, east Poplar street was in the middle of nowhere, blocks from the small settlement on the banks of the Wabash.

When Seamon did the scene of old Fort Harrison, he persuaded a friend to row him across the Wabash to get the proper perspective for how the fort must have looked in the early 19th century. He took photos of the view, now dominated by the Elks Club, and reconstructed the striking, moody landscape of a fort in the wilderness.

Few remnants of the Wabash and Erie Canal remain in the area, so Seamon traveled to Metamore, took a trip on the restored portion of the Whitewater Canal, and thus was able to picture the way the canal and the locks must have looked in the short time the canal flourished before the coming of the railroad.

Night and winter scenes appeal to Seamon and they dominate the Sherer collection of local scenes.

Seamon senses a swing back to an interest in our past, and he is receiving a number of commissions for scenes of historic interest.

It is all very satisfying to Salty, but he isn't having the reputed life of leisure of the legendary artist, which is probably a fiction anyway.

As Christmas neared, Salty wasn't exactly complaining, but he was more than busy with commissions from all over the midwest. Even artists have the Christmas rush.



# Two famous homes



The Preston House

The Preston House is the oldest surviving home in Terre Haute. It was built between 1823 and 1827 by a French merchant from New Orleans and later acquired by Nathaniel Preston. The Dresser home was the birthplace of Paul Dresser, who wrote "On the Banks of the Wabash."

The Paul Dresser birthplace





**D. OMER SEAMON**

Community Affairs File

# Area Artist Savors Work, Success

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By HOWARD STEVENS  
Tribune State Editor

ROSEDALE, Ind. — Like a vintage wine, Artist D. Omer Seamon gets better with age. How does he do it?

"I work, if you can call it work, seven days a week, 10-12 hours a day. I love to paint," Seamon admits.

Seamon, who looks like an artist, but doesn't act like one, is as common as an old shoe. But, his paintings are uncommonly beautiful and they sell like hot cakes.

During a recent art show, Seamon sold most of his paintings. The total is something he shares only with the IRS.

During a year, Seamon will sell more than 300 paintings. On occasion, he will paint three or four postcard size paintings — "drops of water color," he calls them.

Seamon watercolors are found in many Wabash Valley homes and business houses. They also hang in national and international institutions.

Meticulous in his drawing and solid in his composition, he creates work that has caused the public to beat a path to his door. His brilliant handling of watercolors are always full of human interest.

"I'm old fashioned. I believe a painting should be understood to be enjoyed. I don't have to push myself to paint."

Seamon didn't arrive yesterday on the art scene. He has been at it for nearly 50 years.

"I started in the commercial art field and then to fun — free lancing. I don't know of anyone who enjoys his work more than me," he confides.

Seamon does most of his work from his studio in the hill country around his seven acre home he built himself. But, he also gets around.

"I just got back from New Harmony and I travel extensively in southern Indiana. I love Indiana landscapes — I like most everything about the state," he says.

A native of Gibson County, Seamon is the only artist in the family. He says his father encouraged him and his mother showed him great patience. The combination worked, he concedes.

Landscapes are Seamon's

favorite subjects. He doesn't have to go far to find them.

"I love to record the beauty of nature. I study trees before I paint them. An artist, like a photographer, should be interested in detail and he must get it right."

Seamon's skill and feelings are reflected in his work. He's happy with his work.

"I have no complaints. I'm doing what I like most. A good piece of art doesn't need a lot of window dressing. I make my own frames and I make them simple. If the work is good you don't need a lot of trappings."

Seamon's trademark used to be a pipe jutting out nattily from his mouth and a trim, neat moustache. He still has the moustache, but he gave the pipe up, 10-12 years ago.

Cook, confidant and critic to Seamon is his wife, Polly.

"She keeps everything in focus. She's a tremendous cook," he swears.

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SUNDAY, SEPT. 19, 1976



**SALTY SEAMON: HOOSIER ARTIST** — "I've never spent anytime in my life trying to impress anybody that I was an artist. I've never found it necessary to be tempermental, get mad or throw things. I'm simply a good natured guy who likes to get along with the world." Artist D. Omer 'Salty' Seamon.



# Salty Seamon lives content in his art and surroundings

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Artists (T)

ROSEDALE — At age 68, D. Omer "Salty" Seamon has the energy of a much younger man.

His day begins at 7 a.m. when he makes the short stroll from the home he built in the 1950s to the art studio he built in the 1960s.

His handiwork is everywhere and he lives in its midst daily.

Seamon is best known in a simple title: "Hoosier Artist." It was the title of a short film produced at Indiana State University several years ago about his life and seems to best describe his work.

Local residents recognize his work. It most always is of some Indiana scene — covered bridges, old barns, winding country roads, massive oak trees... depictions of rural Indiana in its most beautiful colors.

"I think of artists as communicators," he said during a recent interview in his Rosedale studio. "Some of these people put globs of paint on a canvas and expect people to understand what it means or figure out the mood the artist was in when he did the painting. I think if people can't understand your work, then you have failed."

He does not want to criticize so-called "modern art." His attitude always has been "to each his own." What Seamon seeks to communicate is the essence of "ruralness" in Indiana — the farm and the shadow of the trees....

"I don't drive by an old barn without imagining its story. Did some guy really suffer to build that barn? I always wonder," said Seamon.

There are still occasions when the artist packs a small lunch and disappears for hours while driving down Hoosier roads. "The dirtier and more winding, the better," he said.

In these out-of-the-way spots, Seamon has found thousands of subjects for his pencil and water colors. He has slides of each painting stored and estimates there are between 5,000 and 6,000 paintings recorded on film.

Salty Seamon's first recollection of drawing goes back to his childhood. While still 5 years old, he would draw tiny pictures across the bottom of his parents' letters to his brother fighting overseas in World War I. Seamon would later serve the U.S. in the South Pacific in World War II and marine scenes would be the subject of nearly 100 other drawings and paintings.

Tribune Staff Writer Craig McKee spent a recent afternoon with local artist D. Omer "Salty" Seamon. Photographs were taken by The House of Photography.

In an era when practicality was emphasized, Seamon looks back in wonder.

"In those days, kids interested in music or art were encouraged to do something else. But my parents encouraged me when they saw I had a little talent," Seamon said.

He was graduated from high school and has taken three home art home study courses. Based on that limited education and the practice of years, Seamon earns several hundred dollars for each work today.

"My parents bought a book or two for me. When I was in the seventh grade, I took my first home study course. My father paid the first \$5 and I paid after that. I cut grass, passed bills or whatever it took to pay it. I think it meant more to me because of that," he said.

As a teen-ager, he worked for a dry goods store in his hometown of Princeton. "I drew some show cards for the store window displays.... I really thought that was something," Seamon said.

A home study course led him to Minneapolis in November 1929, where he was employed by Paramount Studios. While there, he met an elderly man "who could paint beautifully with a four-inch brush. He could even paint tiny flowers with that brush. He painted sets and backdrops and was wonderful. He taught me a lot while I worked there."

But Seamon came back to Indiana — to Terre Haute — in 1931. He began a career as a commercial artist at the former Thomson-Symon Co. which continued — with an interruption for World War II service — until 1954 when he became a free-lance artist.

"In commercial art, you had different experiences — lettering, poster drawing.... I did a lot of posters. There just aren't many good poster men anymore," he said.

He left commercial art for good, though, and turned his attention to free-lance work. "It got to the place where I was doing so much work on my own time that I was making more money doing that than my salary," he recalled.

Twenty-five years later, he is doing the same work.

Some paintings are subjects of his choice — usually for art shows in Indiana. Some paintings are commissioned — "It's a test to please someone who is paying for it." He still does architectural renderings ("because it's so precise") and is many times called upon to do biographical montages which are popular in the area.

The montages feature a portrait of a person to be honored — often a retiree — around which Seamon draws tiny depictions of incidents in the person's life. "There are usually several people involved in the work giving me ideas and recalling incidents. I've been there a few times when they present it and it's fun to watch them react and wonder how people knew some of those things," he said.

Art has been his life and he has no regrets: "I've been the luckiest guy. I've always been able to do what I liked best. That's why I don't understand these young people who can't find themselves — I guess I knew what I always wanted to do."

Of course, there are people who believe he always had the luxury of his own clutter in the studio. The studio was a latter-day development. Woodworking and construction have been his hobbies and he takes as much pride in building his own frames as he does in the paintings.

"There are a lot of things you can do in this life if you pace yourself. For instance, I excavated the basement of the studio with a shovel. I would dig for an hour before breakfast and an hour after dinner. It was just enough exercise. A lot of people would try to do it all in two days. I did it in a month and didn't knock myself out," he said.

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He has an appreciation for work and for his native state. Despite advancing age, he still likes to climb fences and take walks in the woods. His camera is usually in hand — the first step in his own creative process.

After taking pictures at various angles, he will do several thumbnail sketches of his subject. He then uses tracing paper for the original drawing. He later transfers the drawing,

through the tracing paper, to a permanent surface. "That way, if something comes out wrong or I want to move a tree or something, I don't have to erase and mess up the permanent surface."

The final painting comes later, and, compared to drawing, it is easy. "If you don't do the drawing right, no amount of paint will cover it up," Seamon said. "I have to work at it. Things don't just come naturally."

Artists, he said, thrive on compliments. And, "it's a great feeling when someone likes your work well enough to pay for it."

His greatest honor came most recently when he was presented an honorary doctorate at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology. The award still leaves him in awe — "to think they would give you an honor like that... for something that has been

fun!"

Known as "Salty," he was born Denzil Omer Seamon and still signs his work, 'D. Omer Seamon.'

"My second day at Thomson-Symon one of the fellas came up and asked what my name was. I said, 'Seamon, like the sailor.' He said, 'Like a salty seaman.' Well, the name just stuck. In Minneapolis, they called me 'Denny.' I didn't like the name Denzil. Then they started calling me 'Omer' and that wasn't much better. I kinda liked 'Salty' and that's what it's been ever since."

He lives with his wife, Polly, and enjoys a beautiful view of Parke County timber. It was not always easy, but he has achieved his goals in life.

"I'm just a country boy who likes to paint," he said at the end of the interview. It's how he wants to be known — nothing fancy, no fanfare, no polish... just an image of simplicity and honesty. It is an image he paints every day and one he has always sought.

And, as he notes, what more could one man ask?



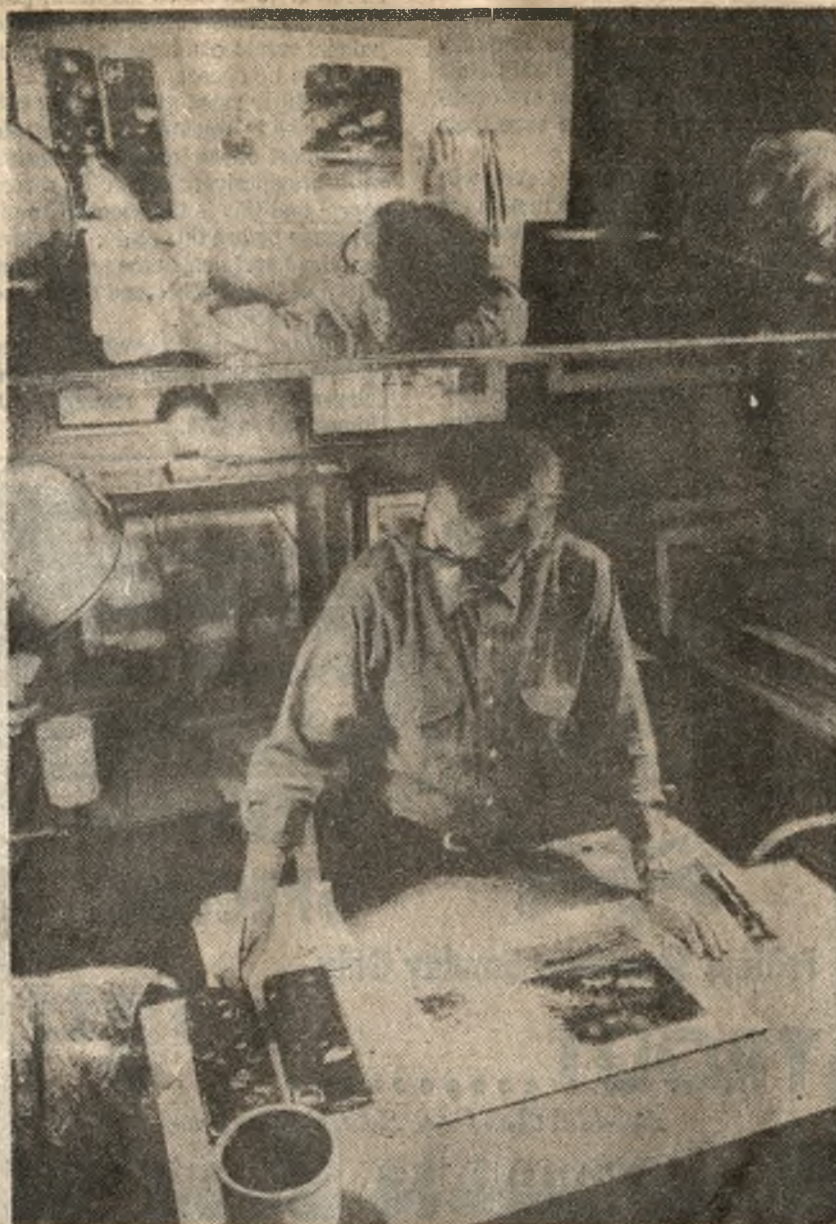
OUTDOOR WORK — D. Omer "Salty" Seamon is best known for depictions of rural Indiana scenes — many times including barns and bridges. Sketching in the outdoor atmosphere is relaxing for the artist, but he often takes a camera along to catch several different angles of his potential subject.





**WATERCOLOR CLOSEUP** — Detail is important in the production of watercolor paintings. However, Seamon told The TRIBUNE that drawing is the first and most important step — "no amount of paint can cover-up bad drawing," he said.





**MIRROR IMAGE** — A mirror image of Seamon at work often helps visitors and students understand the work of the watercolor artist. He uses the demonstration table several times each year for various groups who visit the studio. The artist works on another watercolor project.





**WORK IN STUDIO** — Salty Seamon is most at home in his rural Rosedale studio. He constructed the building himself and it is

designed to fulfill his needs for extra space. Seamon is at work on an architectural rendering at his drawing board.





**WOODWORKING** — Part of Seamon's artistic skill is expressed in making frames for his many works of art. He has constructed a special workshop below his studio where he can be diverted from the water colors for a few minutes. He uses several special tools in constructing the frames.



# Swope slates Salty Seamon retrospective art exhibition

Artists (T.H.) SEP 10 1981

The Sheldon Swope Art Gallery will open its 39th season on Friday at 8 p.m. with a lifetime retrospective exhibition of watercolors by D. Omer ("Salty") Seamon of Rosedale.

Comprised of 114 paintings created between 1945 and 1981 by the popular local artist, the exhibition will continue through Oct. 11.

The following is the essay to the catalog of the exhibition written by Robert D. Kinsman, director of the Swope Art Gallery.

Denzil Omer Seamon was born in 1911 near Princeton in Gibson County. He was the youngest of four children born to Louis and Estel Seamon. His parents were farmers. No one on either side of the family had ever been an artist, but that did not prevent Seamon's parents from encouraging him to develop his talent. When his parents wrote to his oldest brother who was serving in the Army during World War I, Omer, then only six and unable to write, told his news in pictures drawn in the margins of the letters. While other boys played games after school, young Omer drew pictures and soon became good enough to earn money by tracing architectural drawings. A job sweeping floors in a dry goods store was followed by another in a clothing store where he learned to letter showcards and trim windows.

It was while he was working as a window-trimmer in Evansville that Seamon enrolled in a home-study course with Art Instruction, Inc., of Minneapolis, which was the closest he came to formal art training. He responded to the instruction of Walter J. Wilwerding and upon completing the course won first prize in a competition for graduates. The school placed Seamon with Paramount Studios in Minneapolis, where he painted posters for theater lobbies. The youngest apprentice in an office of 17 commercial artists, Seamon had everything to learn and did. He especially profited from the example and criticism of his supervisor, Gene Hundredmark. During his two years with Paramount, Seamon studied the work of a number of popular artists, such as Hollywood set designer Russell Patterson; Ludwig Hohlwein, a German poster artist; Maxfield Parrish; Vernon Grant of Collier's magazine-fame; Norman Rockwell; and N.C. Wyeth, among others.





**'SALTY' SEAMON**  
...at his studio

When the depression hit, Seamon lost his job at Paramount and returned to Princeton. He applied for work with Thompson-Symon Company in Terre Haute and was hired almost overnight. Thompson-Symon specialized in billboard displays and had use of Seamon's experience in poster design. For the next 23 years, except for three years spent in the Army during World War II, Seamon worked at Thompson-Symon and eventually became art director. He resigned in 1954 to free-lance as a commercial artist and to devote more time to his first love, watercolor painting.

Seamon had found time to paint while serving as a supply sergeant with the Army in the South Pacific from 1942 to 1945. His unit island-hopped from Australia to New Guinea, the Solomons and the Philippines before reaching Japan.

Despite the uncertainties of war, oppressive heat and humidity, and the scarcity of paint materials, Seamon managed to complete about 100 watercolors, a selection of which were shown at the Sheldon Swope Art Gallery in 1945. The works confirmed his taste for a medium he had first mastered as a commercial artist.

The paintings done in the South Pacific reveal an artistic talent and an aesthetic sensibility already well developed. The composition is reminiscent of Edgar Degas and James McNeill Whistler in the candid views and eccentric cropping of motifs. Human subjects are informal and unposed. Axes and planes intercept one another in a dynamic way. Nature is seen with an eye for topographic detail on the one hand and an appreciation for grand effect on the other. The unique meteorological conditions of the region are convincingly portrayed.

The same dynamic articulation of axes and planes elevates Seamon's paintings of Mexico and New Mexico of the 1950s above the level of ordinary genre. The strong light and shadows and hot arid climate of the desert southwest and of Mexico are effectively rendered. Whether seen at close range or from a distance, the scenes have an amplitude of space, and the individuality and character of human subjects are expressed with rare sensitivity. Postures and attitudes characterize the subjects, whether they are young people pausing to lunch on the sidewalk, a boy napping in a doorway, or a man walking jauntily while balancing a vessel on his head.

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By the 1960s, Seamon had settled down to painting his beloved Indiana countryside. Since his boyhood days on the family farm, Seamon has had a remarkable rapport with nature. His brush has captured the grace of fallen leaves floating on the lazy current of a river, the haze of a hot summer day hanging over a field or veiling a wood, and the rush of icy water in a meandering stream as it undercuts the mantle of snow and ice that threatens to still its movement. Fishermen cast lines on a glassy river as the morning mist gently rises. A rain cloud eclipses the blazing sun above the sprawling prairie. The colors of autumn turn the countryside ablaze, and the dryness of grasses and leaves is nearly audible.

Seamon's brush has seized the freshness of spring, the lushness of summer, and the splendor of autumn, but there seems little doubt that winter is his favorite season. The purity and poetry of a brilliant sun and colored shadows dancing on virgin snow is contrasted to the bleakness and harshness of winter and to the trickle and sparkle of melted snow on a mild day.

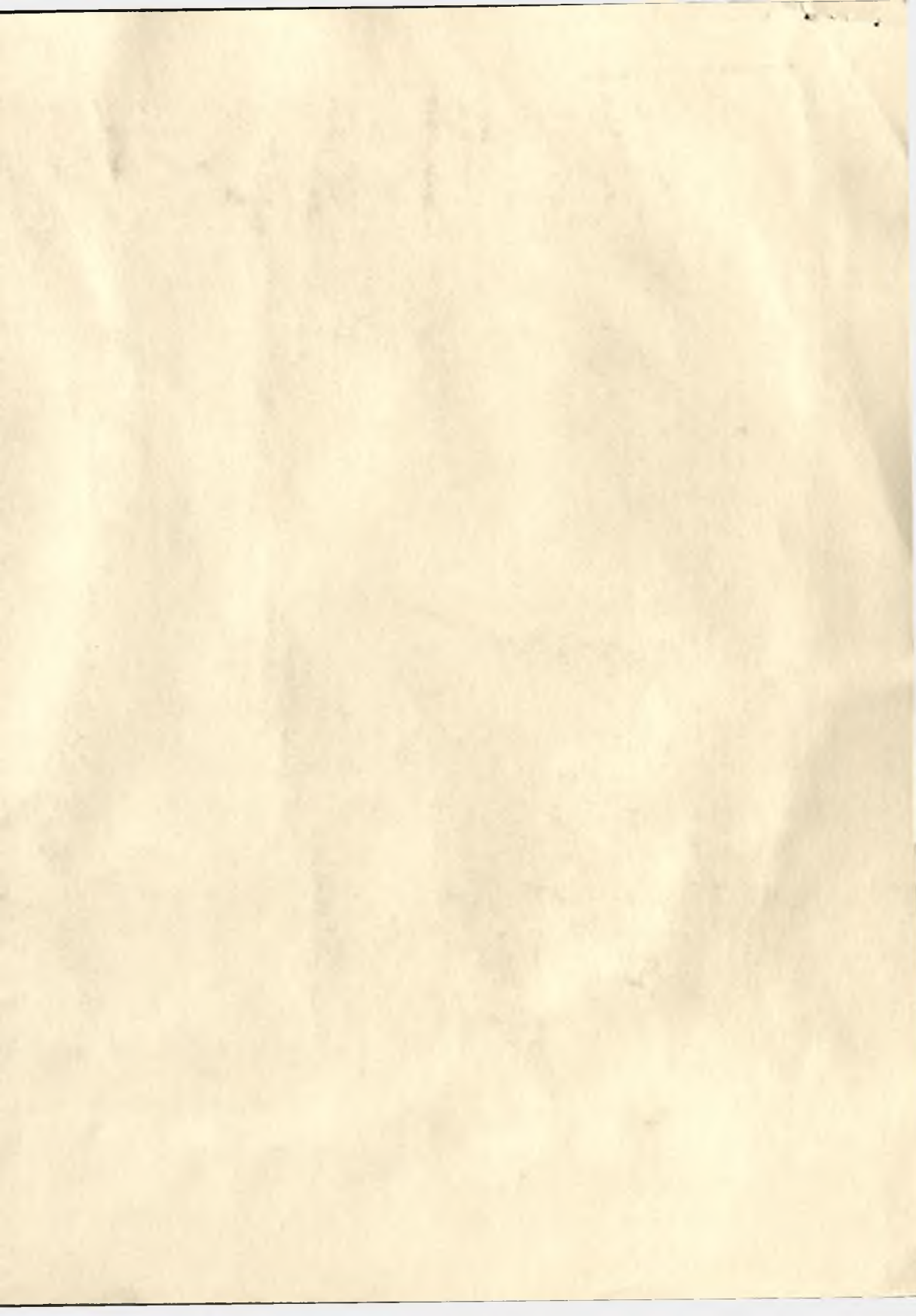
The buildings and bridges of rural Indiana also have been a source of joy to Seamon. Simple farmhouses have been rendered with all of their rustic charm. Picturesque barns have never failed to attract Seamon, and he has never failed to portray their unique poetry. Occasionally he has painted an interior with all of the compelling lyricism and mystery of Edward Hopper. In the many covered bridges of Parke County, where Seamon has made his home for 30 years, he has rediscovered his roots. A woodworker himself, he can only marvel at the logic of the provincial engineers and the consummate craftsmanship of the carpenters who designed and built these bridges. The paradox of the awkwardness and grace with which these "houses" span a river is itself unique and unforgettable.

Seamon's love affair with nature since 1960 has not been restricted to Indiana. From time to time he has painted other places and always with conviction. The picturesque array of lobster pots in Maine is played off against the lobster-like silhouette of a beach house and pier in the background. The transparent clouds and gently bubbling surf that meet the rocks and sand of a California beach have all of the magnificence and magnitude of a Normandy coastal scene as painted by Richard-Parks Bonington. Canada, too, has been pictorialized, from the impressive natural arch at Gaspé Peninsula in Quebec to the raw and rugged beauty of the chill rivers, pine forests and glacial peaks of the Canadian Northwest.

Seamon's paintings of nature are not sublime. Unlike 19th-century Romantic landscape paintings, his do not hold us in awe of nature's might and breathtaking beauty. Rather, Seamon's landscapes are more intimate, like those of William Sidney Mount or the American Luminists of the last century. Seamon's forthrightness in depicting nature is a reflection of the man himself. He is one of the most unassuming persons I have met. While most people work to live, Seamon lives to work. He is absolutely dedicated to painting, but painting would have no meaning for him without nature. He finds there all of the spiritual sustenance he needs. Nature is not only the source of his energy and inspiration, but his very reason for living.

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EMPTY CLASS ROOM — Seamon has painted far more landscapes than he has interiors, but "Empty Class Room" of 1968 is one of his

most powerful compositions. It possesses all of the compelling lyricism and mystery of an interior as painted by Edward Hopper.





**CROSSING THE SMOKEY RIVER** — Seamon has traveled through the Canadian Northwest on horseback the past two summers. The

beauty of this untamed wilderness has served as a new source of inspiration to him, as we see in "Crossing the Smokey River" of 1981.





DEER MILLS BRIDGE — "Deer Mills Bridge" of 1974 was lent by Mr. and Mrs. Jack Ford. It is one of many covered bridges in Parke

County and elsewhere in Indiana captured by Seamon's brush, this time in the spring of the year.



SEAMON, OMER

# Sherer continues Christmas

By DOROTHY J. CLARK  
Tribune-Star Writer

Since 1962, one of the most anticipated events during the holiday season has been the arrival of the special Christmas cards from the Forrest Sherer Agency, 24 N. Sixth St.

The brainchild of the late Forrest

G. Sherer, a watercolor painting was executed each year by local artist, D. Omer "Salty" Seamon, of an historic scene or landmark in the Wabash Valley. The first was a winter scene at Spring Mill State Park, next the Narrows Bridge at Turkey Run State Park, and third, the ferry crossing at Merom Bluff.

Community Affairs File

Scenes of the old covered wagon bridge over the Wabash River, the famous four-cornered horse racing track, the Union Station, the birthplace of Paul Dresser, and old Fort Harrison as it might have looked in 1816 continued to delight everyone who saw them. They became collector's items and much in demand.

Next came watercolors of Wiley High School, the Wabash and Erie Canal, the Preston House, Markle's Mill, the old Baseball Park at 19th and Wabash, the river steamboats Reliance and Reliable, the Rose Orphan's Home, the Grand Opera House, the Big Four Depot, and this year's painting of the former Y.M.C.A., 644 Ohio St.

Gone but not forgotten, the old Y.M.C.A. was originally built as the residence of wealthy Ezra W. Smith, owner of a distillery, flour mill, and several pieces of downtown real estate. The brick structure was considered one of the finest residences in the city when it was built by Smith, a very successful money-making business man.

He had built Corinthian Hall, a block at the northeast corner of Third and Wabash, the first place of public entertainment in Terre Haute on the upper floor, with shops underneath on the ground floor. His general store suffered a fire in 1850, but was rebuilt.

Vigo County Public Library

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The interesting story of Ezra W. Smith and his new home concerns the party he had planned as an open house. Everything was in readiness for the gala event, but for some reason unknown to this day, no one showed up in response to the many invitations. It continues to be one of Terre Haute's greatest mysteries.

Smith left town the next morning never to return. He severed all connections with Terre Haute very abruptly. A few years later he died, and his estate was settled by his business partner, W. D. Griswold.

The house was finally occupied by Judge Huntington, another close friend of Smith, then by James Turner, and finally became the headquarters of the Terre Haute Club before becoming the Y.M.C.A. in July, 1918.

Generations of local youth enjoyed the swimming pool, gymnasium and indoor leather-padded running track. The building served as the Y.M.C.A. until the present new building was constructed in the 1940s at the southeast corner of Sixth and Walnut streets.

The handsome brick landmark shown in the painting was razed before World War II for a parking lot. The artist's painstaking research shows a boy seated in an upstairs window. An early touring car automobile is parked at the curb with two men peering under the hood. Other figures walk along the sidewalk, and a couple walks their pet dog on a leash.

The late Mr. Sherer had planned two more paintings for his series of 20 watercolors from 1962 through 1981. Their subjects will be announced only after their mailing.



### **Seamon work again featured on Sherer Christmas card**

Wayne Sherer, left, and Art Lukens admire D. Omer "Salty" Seamon's watercolor of the old Y.M.C.A. building, the subject of this year's Christmas card.

The 1979 card is the 18th in the series of 20 scenes of local landmarks planned by the late Forrest G. Sherer.  
Staff Photo/Curt Willis



wooded area

T s AUG 2 1 1983

# Seamon home is nestled in

Artists (T.H.)

The rambling ranch style home of Mr. and Mrs. D. Omer "Salty" Seamon will be one of the homes featured during the Cook's Tour, sponsored by the Woman's Department Club.

The tour is set for Sept. 23 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Seamon's studio will be open for viewing.

The Seamon home is accented with watercolors. Although noted mainly for his landscapes, one wall on the north side of the entry con-

tains still life work. One is of the lock from a bank building in Vincennes.

Knotty pine cabinets in the kitchen are one of the outstanding features of the home. Seamon built the cabinets which are topped with formica in an avocado-mottled design. The kitchen is a "C" shape with a complete wall of cabinets on one side, one with scalloped glass inserts for glassware. Wood beams in the ceiling are pine.

A bathroom and master bedroom

adjoin the kitchen. The bedroom is decorated with avocado-colored carpet. The bedspreads are rust in color.

A brick fireplace in the dining rooms helps separate the area into a dining space and sitting room. The dining room is appointed with a dropleaf table and chairs.

A step down from the dining room leads to a sunken living room. A round table and four chairs are tucked into a corner of windows.

The table was made by Seamon from walnut with a glass insert covering 200 feet of tightly wound rope.

One side of the brick and tile patio is edged with a brick planter filled with orange-red impatiens. Beyond the planter stands a tall hickory nut tree, one of many native mid-western trees on the property.

Seamon and his wife, Polly, were married after World War II and he started building the home. It took 12

years to finish the dwelling on seven and one half wooded acres along hilly Route 3, Rosedale, northeast of Terre Haute.

Seamon did most of the work on weekends and evenings. In 1954 he started working out of his home and started construction of his studio in 1960, a project that lasted four years.

The studio has a round, free-standing fireplace in the center, a cathedral ceiling with windows on the west, a small kitchen and a

sleeping loft. A basement serves as the picture frame workshop.

Paintings and frames occupy the walls of the studio, and his hand-made furniture fills the loft. Several dogwood trees outside almost touch the cathedral windows.

Mrs. Jack Williams will be chairman of hostesses at the Seamon home and studio.

For ticket information, contact Mrs. Rexford Laxen, 299-5643, or Mrs. John Kenlay, 235-3348.

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### **Wooded retreat**

**Tribune-Star Photo/Bob Poynter**

The home of Mr. and Mrs. D. Omer "Salty" Seamon is nestled in a woods northeast of Terre Haute. The home and Seamon's studio will be

featured during the annual Cook's Tour sponsored by the Woman's Department Club.





### **In the studio**

Seamon's studio includes a work area, fireplace, small kitchen area and a loft filled with furniture

**Tribune-Star Photo/Bob Poynter**

made by the artist. The annual Cook's Tour is set for Friday, Sept. 23, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



# Loving his work

## At 72, Rosedale man still loves putting ideas

DEC 27 1983

Community Affairs File

Artists (TH)

By Dave Delaney  
Tribune-Star Staff Reporter

ROSEDALE — Sunlight streamed through the floor-to-ceiling window at the far end of the studio as the artist kept busy at his huge easel.

Every now and then, he'd flick his brush into one of two water pots at a small adjacent table before changing to another color: D. (for Denzil) Omer (Salty) Seamon, 72, at work on another watercolor at his rural Rosedale studio.

"When I was a kid my dad told me I could make a living at this," said Salty, who this day was wearing a red-and-black flannel shirt, blue jeans and heavy boots. "But he never told me I'd be putting in 10- to 12-hour days."

Don't let the artist fool you. He loves it. In fact Polly, with whom Seamon married 38 years ago Thursday, will tell you Salty attacks his work seven days a week with the enthusiasm he brought to the canvas as a young man.

Seamon looks like an artist with his straight graying hair and mustache and glasses. The easygoing Seamon got his nickname when he had to explain his last name to a new acquaintance on a job he held years ago.

"I told him my last name was Seamon ... like a seaman at sea," he said. "He said, 'Like an old salt' ... so they started calling me Salty and it stuck."

Seamon always wanted to be a painter. When his older brother was overseas fighting in World War I, 6-year-old Salty wasn't yet able to write, but he drew pictures along the bottom of his parents' letters to the serviceman.

"I never wanted to do anything else," confessed

Salty who was raised on a farm near Princeton. As a kid he painted signs for booths at the Gibson County Fair. "When I found out I could make two or three dollars this way I got the bug," he said smiling.

The self-taught artist said he learned lettering by working as an Evansville window trimmer. Another valuable work experience, Seamon said, was working for Paramount Studios in Minneapolis.

"Talkies were just coming in then, but I got to see a lot of vaudeville actors up there," explained the artist of that experience around 1930. Among them were the Marx Brothers, Laurel and Hardy and Will Rogers.

Seamon describes himself as a Hoosier realist painter.

"I like to paint things people can understand and relate to," he explained. "Being born on a farm I know things like old barns, fences, trees and fence rows."

Seamon doesn't claim to have any high-blown philosophy on art. "If you like it, hang it up," said Salty simply. "It's like Baskin-Robbins ice cream with 31 flavors ... pick out the one you like."

But he does think art should communicate. Artists who paint things only they can understand are "selfish" by Salty's standards. "I think you're successful if you can paint something people understand."

Artists he admires greatly include Andrew Wyeth, Wyeth's cousin Peter Hurd and famed Saturday Evening Post painter Norman Rockwell.

Seamon constantly strives to improve as an artist. "Every time I paint a picture I think there's something I could've done better," he said. "It's a continuous process of trying to do better. I suppose

it's like a writer writing."

As Seamon sat in his studio chair, he was constantly interrupted by the ring of the telephone.

"I think I promised too much work this year," Salty said after putting down the receiver once. "I'm going to make people mad at me if I don't get it out."

Seamon has painted oodles of posters in his day. One he did in the mid-1930s on the Packard automobile was voted among the top 100 posters of that year.

Seamon's artwork has hardly gone unnoticed. It hangs in numerous businesses and homes throughout the Wabash Valley and at various places across the nation.

Among his many works, Seamon has put Red Skelton's boyhood home in Vincennes to canvas for the famed comedian and has done the same to Jimmy Stewart's homestead in Indiana, Pa. Salty has sold some of his pieces to famed silver speculator Lamar Hunt.

He did another painting for entertainer Phil Harris, a native of Linton, and his wife Alice Faye and two for Tony Hulman. One of those hangs in the Indianapolis 500 museum. That large painting of basketballer Larry Bird at Hulman Center was also done by Salty.

Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology has awarded Seamon a honorary doctorate in humanities, while former Gov. Otis Bowen named the Rosedale artist a Sagamore of the Wabash.

He was named a Paul Harris Fellow after the founder of Rotary International, and the Indiana Legislature once passed a resolution commending Salty for his artistic accomplishments.

Community Affairs File  
onto canvas

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JUL 30 1984

# Seamon paints picture of life at Rose dedication ceremony

"I'm very fortunate to receive this distinctive honor," Omer D. "Salty" Seamon told assembled friends and dignitaries Sunday. "I'll try not to be too humble," he joked during dedication ceremonies for the Seamon Salon at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology.

Nearly 150 persons attended the event, which included a lavish luncheon prior to dedication ceremonies at noon. The Seamon Salon is on the second floor of Hadley Hall. Paintings from the private collection of Omer's wife, Polly, have been donated to Rose-Hulman and include scenes depicting life in the South Pacific, Mexico and Indiana.

Calling Seamon "one of the world's great artists," Samuel Hulbert, president of Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, said, "I don't think there could be any greater reward in this life than to have so many friends."

Seamon received a standing ovation when he took the podium.

Poetically, he commented that when all is said and done, the last picture painted and hands folded across the chest, "the only thing you can hold in those cold, gray hands is that which you've given away."

But he added that the honor bestowed to him Sunday "is something I can hold in my hand and I will take it with me."

Hulbert said he was "delighted" to be able to pass the collection from generation to generation, and for others to know "how great Polly and Omer are."

Jack Ragle, Rose-Hulman board of managers president, noted that Seamon has had opportunities to go to other metropolitan areas. "I think we're very fortunate Salty and his wife decided to stay in the Terre Haute area."



Tribune-Star/Bonnie Jeffery

**Honored:** Some 150 persons helped recognize Seamon.

He said the Seamons eventually plan to donate 300 paintings to Rose-Hulman.

Rose-Hulman presented Seamon with an honorary doctorate in 1979. The renowned watercolor artist is also a member of the college's Chauncey Rose Society.

Hulbert presented Seamon with a book of photographs of the 60 paintings scattered in other parts of Rose-Hulman in addition to those in the salon.

Also, he presented Polly and Salty with red plaid jackets from the Chauncey Rose Society. The

jackets are a special honor given to those who have made outstanding contributions to the institution, Hulbert said.

Ovations greeted the couple when they donned the jackets.

William Pickett, Rose-Hulman professor of history, has conducted lengthy interviews with Seamon for a brochure on Rose Hulman's collection.

"With Polly's support, he has caused us ... to stop amidst the hubbub and turmoil and ponder who we are and what it is to be alive," Pickett said.

Seamon, Salty

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Community Affairs File



# Rose-Hulman dedicates new Seamon Salon today

Community Affairs File

By Frances E. Hughes  
Special to Tribune-Star

Dedication ceremonies for the Seamon Salon in Hadley Hall of Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology will be today on the college campus.

A brunch, by invitation only, will begin at 11 a.m., and the dedication will start at noon. College officials who will speak will be Jack Ragle, chairman of the Rose-Hulman Board of Managers; President Samuel F. Hulbert and Dr. William B. Pickett, professor of history.

The salon will be dedicated to D. Omer "Salty" Seamon, one of the state's outstanding watercolorists, and his wife, Marjorie M. "Polly" Seamon. Half a dozen of Seamon's paintings, from the private collection of the artist's wife, have been given to the college.

It is primarily because of this gift that the college has established the Seamon Salon. In addition, approximately 50 of Seamon's paintings from his wife's private collection of 300 watercolors are on loan to the school with the thought of eventually being donated. These are on display in the west end of the ground floor and in the upper hall of the new Olin Hall and in other hallways and offices.

The Seamons have been loyal supporters of the college. Rose is also honoring the artist because of his outstanding talent and because of the achievements he has earned as a result of this talent.

In 1979, Seamon was presented with an honorary doctorate from Rose. In addition, the Seamons are members of the Chauncey Rose Society which is a group of patrons who have provided support for Rose-Hulman.

This group of paintings has been added to other Seamon watercolors at the college. Some were given to Rose-Hulman, some are on loan, some are in other collections and a few were bought by the school. The first one bought was of the Gerstmeier High School building, which was the site of the original Rose Polytechnic Institute.

There are seven Seamon watercolors that are scenes of Terre Haute on loan to the school from the Forest G. Sherer family.

These are some of the paintings done by Seamon every year since 1962 to be reproduced as Christmas cards for Forest Sherer Inc. insurance agency.

There are also three Seamon watercolors in the collection of 92 purchase prize paintings by famous Hoosier artists owned by the Tri Kappa Sorority which are on a permanent loan basis to the college. The paintings of nearly 80 artists in watercolor, oil and acrylic were collected from 1929 to 1970.

Combined with the Tri Kappa paintings and a collection of 123 19th Century British watercolors and the recently acquired Hadley Pottery collection, as well as other individual art acquisitions, the Seamon paintings add an important cultural atmosphere on campus for Rose students and visitors.

The college has in all approximately 300 paintings on display in various campus buildings. The school prides itself on providing a complete education for the students, an education that includes the humanities as well as centering on the subjects of engineering and science.

Seamon watercolors chosen for this select collection of Mrs. Seamon's include those painted in New Guinea, Australia, the Philippines and the Solomons, where the artist painted 200 pictures while in service in the South Pacific during World War II. There are also landscapes painted of scenes in New Mexico, California, Maine, the Canadian Northwest, Gaspé Peninsula in Quebec and the Many historical ones and landscapes in rural Indiana.

An artist of sensitivity and accomplishment, 73-year-old Seamon has painted approximately 2,000 paintings in his lifetime. He seems dedicated to painting nature — trees, creeks, barns, covered bridges and farmhouses — in all of the seasons. Occasionally, he portrays an interior and he also makes architectural drawings.

Born on a farm near Princeton, Seamon learned in his childhood to love nature. He claims he started painting when he was just 6 years old, could not write but drew pictures on letters his mother wrote to his brother who was serving in World War I.

He learned to letter showcards

and trim windows when very young. His only formal training was a home study course with Art Instruction Inc., Minneapolis. This school placed him with Paramount Studios in Minneapolis, where he painted posters for theater lobbies.

When the Great Depression hit, Seamon lost his job and returned to Princeton. He gained employment in 1931 with the Thomson-Symon Company of Terre Haute, where he became art director. In 1954, he resigned to free lance as a commercial artist and watercolorist.

It was while employed at Thomson-Symon that Seamon got his nickname. A fellow employee asked him his name and he said "Seamon like the ocean." The employee then said "Oh, Salty" and the name stuck.

He and "Polly" were married when he returned from the South Pacific. She has proved to be his severist critic and his agent.

In many ways the artist has received recognition. His renderings of old buildings in Terre Haute have become a historical record. He has taught classes in painting and given demonstration programs. Half a dozen firms have used calendars with 14 of his watercolors reproduced on each one. His paintings hang in many public buildings as well as in galleries and homes. James O'Neal of Dallas, Texas, formerly of Marshall, Ill., has 150 Seamon watercolors hung in his house.

A member of the Brown County Art Gallery Association since 1938, Seamon served the group as president in 1971. He has had one-man shows in several galleries, including one in 1981 at the Sheldon Swope Art Gallery.

The Seamons will observe their 40th wedding anniversary next December. After they were married, Seamon started to build his own house in a wooded grove, 12 miles north of Terre Haute. They have lived there ever since.

When that was finished, he took four more years to build his studio 50 feet away. He calls this "the biggest dog house in the County." He makes his own frames and cuts his own mats in the basement workshop.

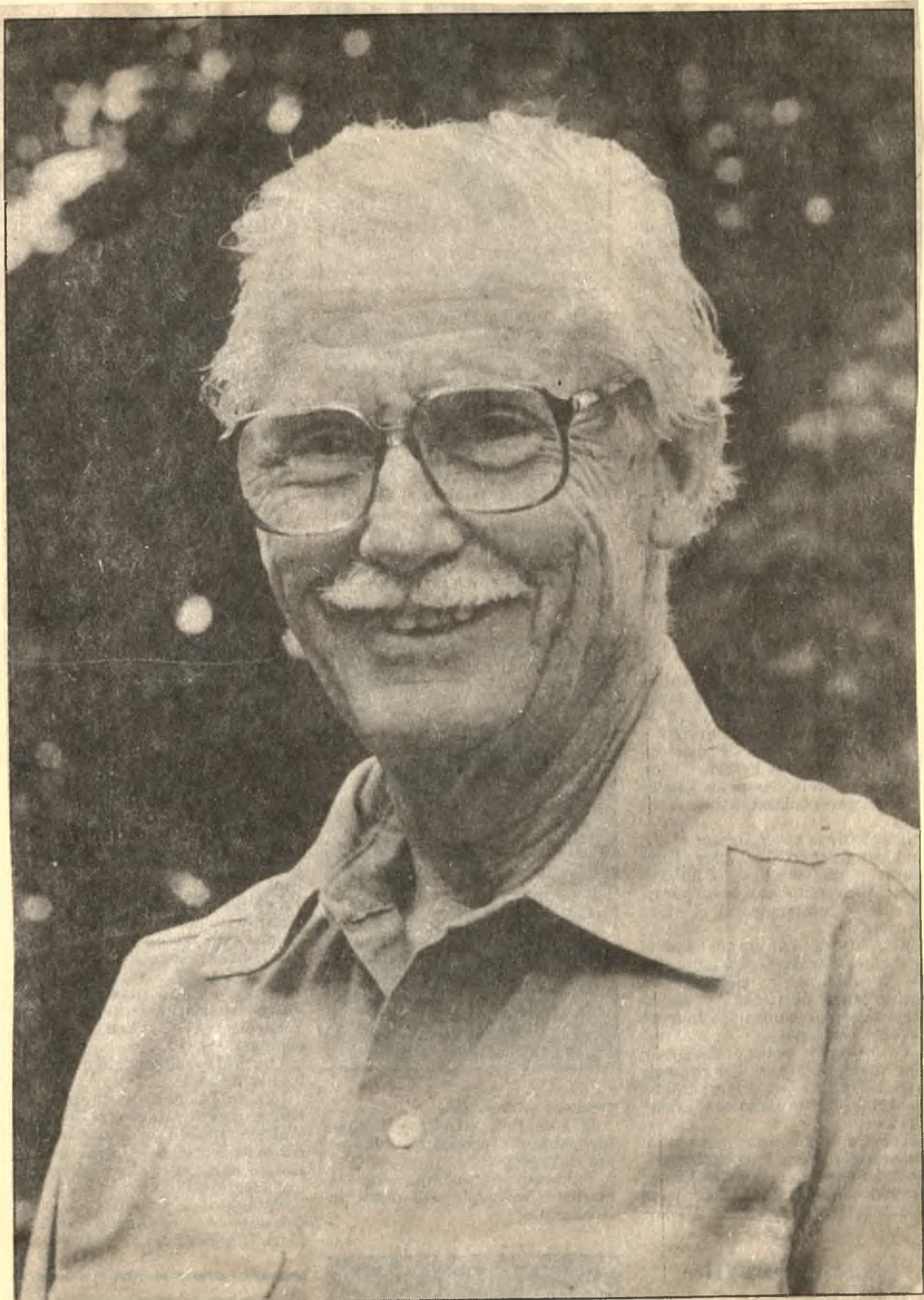
His theory about art is "If you like it, hang it. You're going to live with it."

Seamon, Salty

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Community Affairs File





**Finds home at Rose-Hulman: D. Omer "Salty" Seamon honored today.**



## Painting of Wiley Draws Acclaim

A doomed, but still thriving, landmark in the downtown Terre Haute area is the subject of a Christmas greeting published by a local insurance firm featuring paintings by a renowned area artist, D. Omer "Salty" Seamon.

"Wiley High School 1965" is the Seamon painting reproduced on the face of the current season greeting being distributed by the Forrest Sherer Agency, Inc., which has for several years featured paintings by the local artist in a similar manner. The original is on display at the insurance agency offices in the Chanticleer Building, 24 N. 6th St.

Over 100 years old, the original Terre Haute High School but for many years known as Wiley, is presented in the painting as the dominant part of a snowscape seen in quarter-view from the northeast corner of the intersection at 7th and Walnut Sts.

Having captured the bright but seemingly remote illumination of the winter morning sun, the artist has achieved a feeling of space and serenity suitable to the season in spite of the apparent bustle of automobile and pedestrian traffic with students on their way to school. The stark angles of the old building with its flying chimneys, peaks and bell-towers stand against a grey-blue sky which promises more snow for the freshly whitened scene.

The painting quietude, akin to the stillness that accompanies fresh fallen snow, lends also a touch of foreboding, for so it seems. Two years ago now the snow will fall on a huge parking lot, the school having fallen to progress, according to plans presently under way.

A new high school is to be built on a part of the former Paul Cox Airport obtained by the Vigo County School Corporation in exchange with the City of Terre Haute for the Wiley property. The old high school building is of no value. In fact, the anticipated expense of tearing it down, and who was to pay for it, was a delaying factor in the talks between city and school officials prior to the exchange agreement.

But memories of the old building and the people in it, some of those memories still under construction, do have value. At least some of that value is captured in Seamon's work.

And it was recognized by Sherer and by others interested in Wiley. Permission has been granted for 5,000 copies of the print to be reproduced for sale, the proceeds to go to the support of the Wiley Band. This is a project of the band boosters.

Meanwhile, Wiley goes on—for now.

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INDIANA ROOM



# T. H. ART AND ARTISTS

T.H. Art & Artists



**LOCAL ARTISTS SCORE**—Terre Haute's Floyd Bombard, left, chats with Omer "Salty" Seaman, Rosedale, at the recent Paris Art League's twelfth annual art exhibit at Paris, Ill. Bombard's painting, "October Reflections," was honored as one of exceptional merit. John Laska, also of Terre Haute, right, poses with another award winning painting, "Girl with Pussy Cat."



ing, "Girl with Pussy Cat." Seaman was a judge at the show which will appear at the Swope Art Galley here beginning Oct. 17-31. The exhibit will share the gallery limelight with a collection of 34 oils by Henry Strater, prominent Maine artist.

Ind. Tribune 10/5/65

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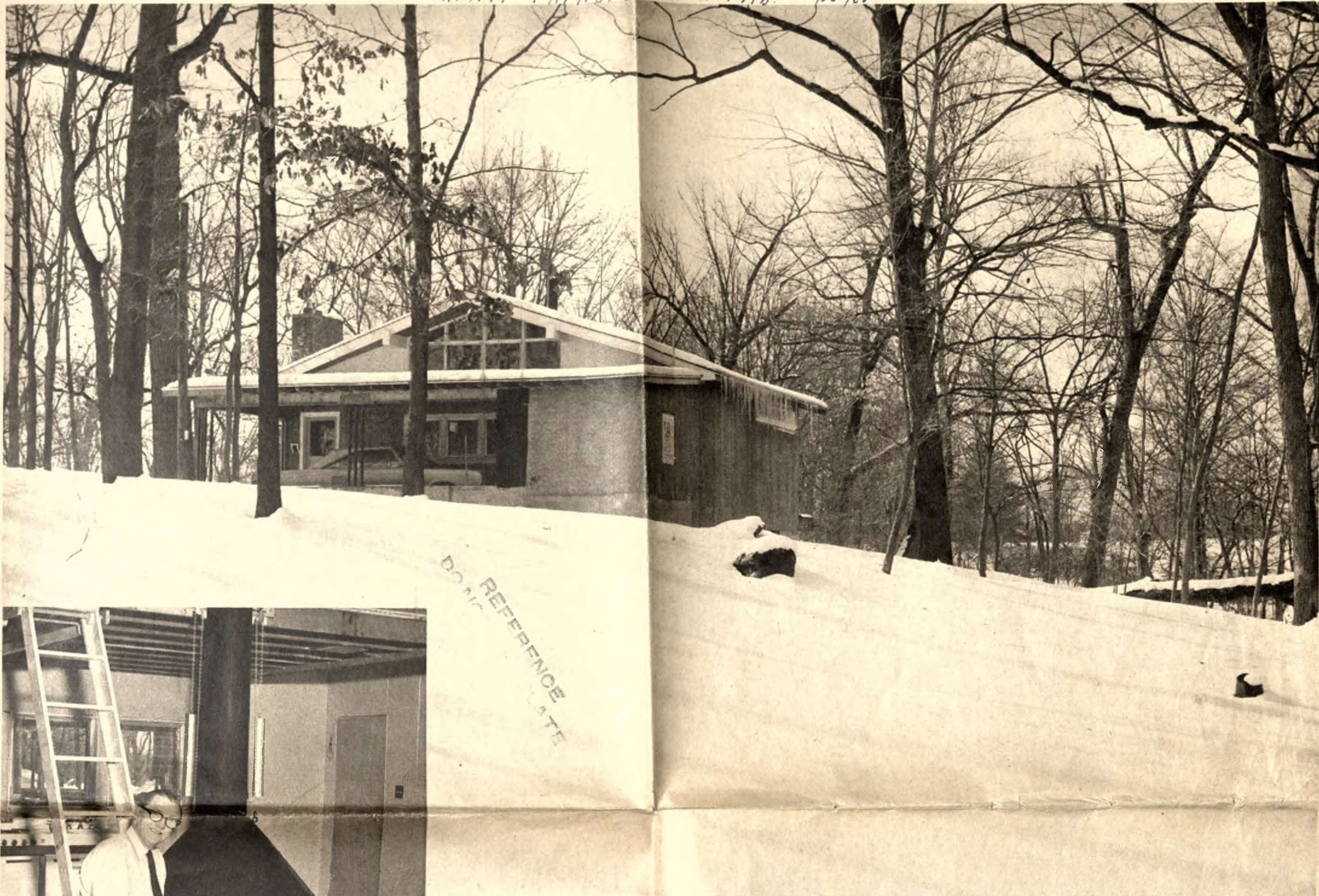
INDIANA ROOM



# SALTY SEAMON'S WOODLAND STUDIO

T.H. Art & Artists - T.H. Trib. 2/25/68

Photos by Martin.



SALTY'S STUDIO situated in a grove near his RR 1, Rosedale home.

D. O. "Salty" Seamon, free lance artist, has nearly completed what most artists dream of—an artist's studio surrounded by nature and planned to benefit his artistic needs to the utmost.

Seamon, after 23 years as art director for an outdoor advertising company, now does free lance commercial work and enjoys working in water colors. He began his studio over three years ago and expects to move all of his supplies into it this spring.

He designed it and built it behind his home on the Vigo-Parke County line road. It is situated in a grove of trees on a little knoll overlooking an area that is beautiful all year.

The studio measures 30 by 30 feet and when finished will be covered on the exterior by board and back stripping.

Inside the one-and-a-half story structure is a large room which Salty plans to use one day as a classroom to teach art pupils, a workshop where he makes all of his frames, a kitchen and a sleeping area in the loft.

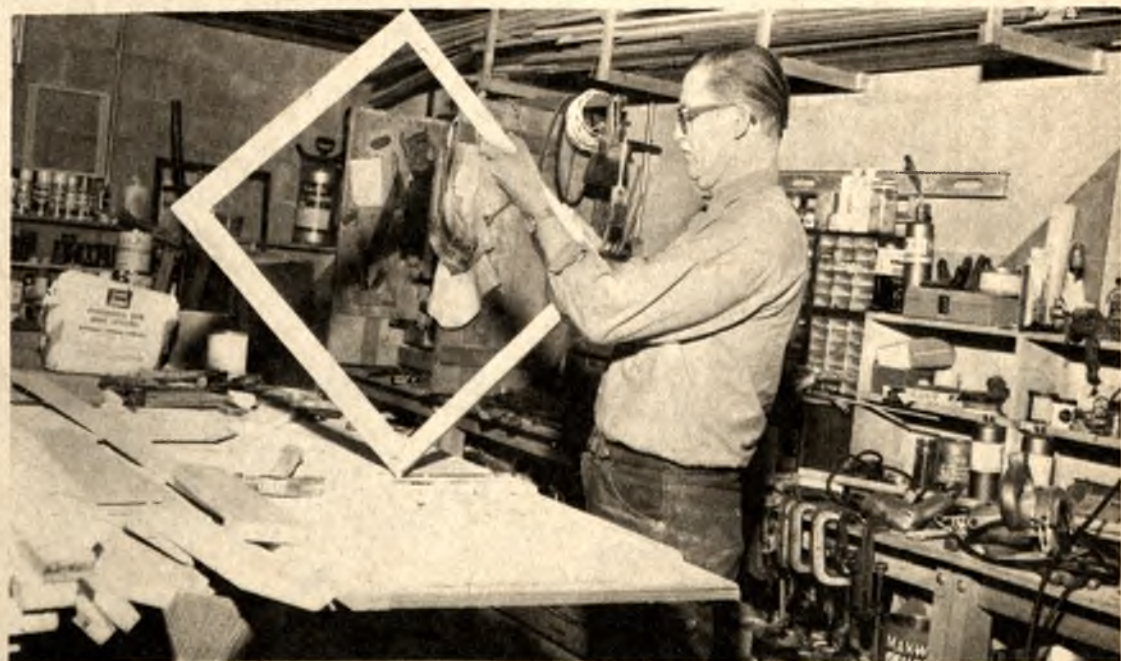
A FIREPLACE of his own design is centered in the kitchen area of the studio just below the loft which contains bunk beds the artist constructed.



PAINT, BRUSHES, PEN AND INK are readily available at the large drawing board that will assume a prominent place in the new studio.



HIS WATER COLORS are displayed in the room that will become a classroom. The story-and-a-half high window overlooks a balcony.

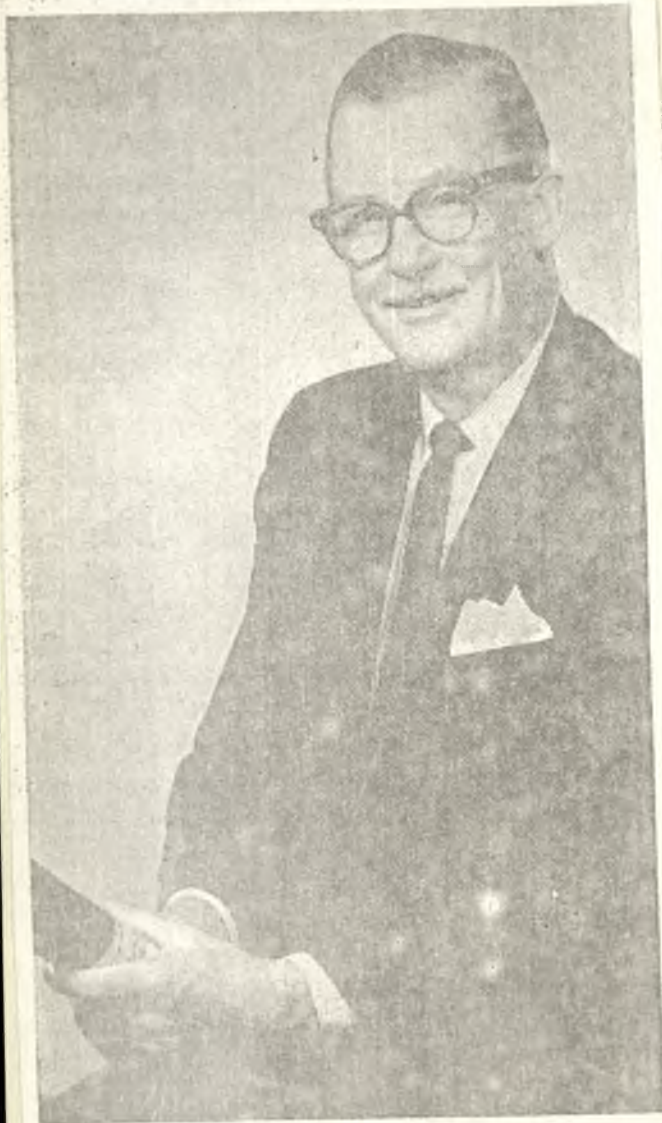


FINISHING A FRAME for one of his paintings is easier in the new workshop located below the studio.



# D. Omer Seamon's Art Show at Village Arts

TRIB 12-3-70 T.H. ARTISTS



D. OMER SEAMON

By ELIZABETH CIANCONE

It is always easier to write a review when one is genuinely enthusiastic about the subject. It is even easier to write while still flushed with the initial enthusiasm the show inspires. All of which make it unmixed pleasure to review the one-man show of D. Omer "Salty" Seamon's work on exhibit now through Dec. 12 at the Village Arts Gallery, 674 Ohio St.

Mr. Seamon is a confessed realist when it comes to art. While his work often evokes a mood in the viewer, it is not presented as a guess-the-artist's-mood game. An especially fine job of creating a mood is done by a water color he calls "Old Corn Crib." Although the corn crib which modeled for this work has been razed, anyone who has lived at all in Indiana has seen its counterpart a dozen times. This particular picture captures the crib on a gray-brown November day, and brings to the viewer all that is

poignant in that kind of day. While not a conventionally beautiful subject, there is an austere and sombre beauty which creates a mood of haunting nostalgia. "The Corn Crib" has a presence about and within which goes beyond board and beam — an essence of the past. This is one of the newer works of Mr. Seamon, and while it is difficult to define the difference in this and the earlier works, one cannot help feeling that he has quietly moved into deeper waters.

"Mood" is the work the artist uses in connection with his work. There is a comfortable quality to it all. It is possible to imagine living with this art companionably for years and years. There is a relatedness between viewer and painting that one sees at the Seamon show. Watching people look at the paintings, one sees faces soften under the Seamon spell. Perhaps because they so truly reflect the man.

All of the paintings, and the

"Corn Crib" in particular, possess a quality of depth when viewed from across the room but they also possess a wealth of detail which bears close scrutiny. This dual quality only adds to the pleasures of the paintings.

One small and carefully detailed picture titled "Old Terre Haute House" manages to suggest the building in a swirl of wind-driven snow. It has the effect of creating a wistful time-gone-by mood, and a closer look reveals the trolley car which verifies the first general impression of the work.

Mention should also be made of "Another Barn." For fidelity to detail this picture can scarcely be surpassed. The lovely old barn with the sunlight and shadows draws one into it, and the fresh-cut stump in the foreground has obviously broken before the woodman's saw has finished the cut. And, evidences of the March thaw are everywhere apparent, from the tiny stream to the damp-dark wood of the barn that invites touching. The title "Another Barn" is a typical Seamon understatement of what could be called "Another Treasure."

"Red Sulky" will bring a smile of recognition to the horse enthusiast. It is a large, handsome painting of horse and driver returning to the horse-barn after a race or work out. Again, sunlight and shadows on familiar objects and surfaces play about in inviting contrasts.

If I have given the impression that Mr. Seamon's work runs to moody nostalgia for rural Indiana, you must see his views of the Wabash, his fishing scenes which, like real fishing trips are both lively and restful, and the precise representations of nature or of well-known sights or scenes in the area. "Grande Finale" is the apt title for a painting which commemorates a bit

of local history as a group of onlookers watch the demolition of the old Opera House which stood near the Terre Haute House.

An interesting part of the exhibit consists of paintings made in the South Pacific when Mr. Seamon was "on tour" there during World War II. While these will naturally appeal to men who were there, they also remind everyone of the era. Such titles as "GI Hand Laundry," "Debarking After 25 Days at Sea," "Outdoor Movies," "Chow Line Aboard Liberty Ship," and about 35 others will surely bring out everyone's favorite war-time story. Many of these paintings have a beauty apart from the chronicle of the era, which make them pleasurable in their own right.

Mr. Seamon has said "A picture will never be painted better than it is drawn or better than the knowledge of the subject." It is obvious that he knows and loves Indiana. His skill as an artist and craftsman and his own gentle perspective of the world makes the viewer know and love it as he does.

Anyone who lives in Indiana, or has lived in Indiana, will find a bit of home in these paintings. One word of warning — it will be difficult, if not impossible, to keep from taking a bit of it home to preserve that mood.

Community Affairs File

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA



# Rosedale Artist Captures Valley Beauty on Easel

By HOWARD STEVENS  
Tribune State Editor

ROSEDALE, Ind. — Artist D. Omer "Salty" Seamon loves to paint and his paintings show it.

Seamon, who paints in his studio located in the rolling hills of this west-central Indiana community, has been doing what he likes best for most of his life. His soft, natural paintings reveal his love for his work and his surroundings.

"I don't think of painting as work. It's a labor of love with me," Seamon admits.

"My first grade teacher asked us to draw something and I drew a house. She happened to put my painting on the wall and bragged about it. That's how it all started and I've been painting ever since."

If you saw Seamon walking along the street, chances are you would pick him out as an artist for the simple reason that he looks like one. He is tall, handsome and he presents a striking figure—trim, neat and well-groomed.

Although he travels once a month to Nashville, Ind., where he presides as president of the Brown County Art Gallery, Seamon sticks pretty close to his studio. Where art is concerned, Terre Haute born Seamon is a conservative.

"We just aren't producing enough outstanding young artists. Those who do develop often shoot-off and paint material that no one can understand," Seamon suggests.

Seamon's beautiful mushroom paintings reveal his sensitive touch.

"The art patrons I know are interested in paintings that they

can identify with. They are not buying paintings which they cannot understand.

Seamon is not a Sunday artist. He works nearly every day of the week and usually he is at his drawing board by 7 a.m. to get an early start. As a hobby, he turns out most of his own wooden frames from native wood.

"With me, work is not a bad word. I enjoy working and I have no idea of retiring. I can't imagine the time when I would ever stop painting."

As an artist, Seamon came up the hard way—a correspondence course and working with a band of expert circus artists in Minneapolis. He also did a stint as a commercial artist with an advertising firm.

"My father and mother offered a lot of encouragement and patience. I am indebted to them for introducing me to the important things in life — the right values and productive work habits."

For relaxation, Seamon and his wife, Polly, regularly take to the nearby hills on two riding horses. The couple cut their own firewood to help keep fit.

Seamon makes no bones about the fact that he directs his talents toward painting which often appeal to older folks.

"After all, established patrons of the arts are not youngsters. They also happen to be the people who have money to buy paintings and that, after all, is the name of the game."

An optimist, Seamon has great confidence that art is going to be around for a long time.

"Patron interest in art has never been more vigorous. More and more communities are becoming interested in the arts and art galleries are, generally, on the increase. What we need now are more young artists: dedicated individuals who really love their work," Seamon says.

Seamon's optimism in the future of art is borne out with a record sale of paintings last year at the Brown County Art Gallery.

"More than \$35,000 worth of paintings were sold last year at Nashville. This shows an intense interest in art and it reveals a confidence in an art form which is personally gratifying to me as an artist."

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Community Affairs File

D. OMER "Salty" Seamon



T.H. ARTISTS

TRIB 3/3/71



**ARTIST AT WORK**—D. Omer Seamon, RR 1, Rosedale, works in his studio nestled in the beautiful woods northeast of Terre Haute. Seamon is president of the Brown County Art Gallery.





BLEAK WINTER CHILL and a mood of stark loneliness are poetically captured in this 1951 watercolor titled Red Barn by Terre Haute artist, D. Omer Seamon. The scene is Terre Haute and the principal landmark is the Yaw Mill. Nearby structures, familiar to long-time residents, include the Baptist Church at 2nd and Farrington Sts., the old Sam Price tavern, and the Corey grocery store which was destroyed by fire in 1950. Although the buildings themselves are bold and seemingly timeless, their structure tends to dissolve in quivering reflections which give balance and movement to the total composition. The work was donated to the Sheldon Swope Art Gallery by the artist in 1954 and will be featured at the gallery as Art Object of the Week beginning today through Jan. 8.

TS JAN 2 1978

*Biography  
Seamon, D. Omer*

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**SEAMON HONORED** — D. Omer "Salty" Seamon (left) was the guest of honor Sunday at the opening of an exhibit of his artistry on display through March 25 at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College. With the artist at the reception Sunday afternoon were his wife and Richard Ancona, art department chairman at The Woods. Seamon enjoys widespread acclaim, particularly as a watercolorist. The exhibit of his work is on display in the College Library during regular hours which are 8:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, until 5 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Sunday.

House of Photography Photo.

Artists (T.H.)

MAR 17 1975



# Advertising Arts Workshop Scheduled Here April 11

A critique of the graphic arts entries will be presented by D. Omer "Salty" Seamon, local artist, as a part of the 1973 Advertising Arts Workshop Wednesday, April 11, at the Tiley Memorial Union Building at Indiana State University.

The event is sponsored by the Terre Haute Advertising Club. Co-chairmen for the arrangements are Frederick Kraley, director of national advertising for the Tribune-Star Publishing Co., and Dr. Harry F. Krueckeburg, Director of the Bureau of Business Research at Indiana State University.

The program will begin at 9 a.m. when Jerry Trimble, Advertising Club president, will welcome the group. Lawrence Knight, assistant professor of marketing at ISU, and Frank



D. OMER "SALTY"  
SEAMON

Weikel, advertising manager of the Consumer Electronics Division of RCA, Indianapolis, will speak during the morning program.

The luncheon and presentation of awards in four separate categories will follow. These are newspaper advertising, radio, billboard and television advertising.

The awards competition is open to secondary school pupils and college students, according to the chairmen. Co-operative entries may be submitted but a single name must be listed as the entrant.

T MAR 29 1973  
All entries must be received by the ISU Bureau of Business Research by Monday, Apr. 2. Those interested in submitting entries are asked to contact Dr. Krueckeburg at the University.

"Salty" Seamon is a Hoosier artist who has won national acclaim for his work in watercolors, Kraley pointed out, and his paintings are included in many permanent collections and in national and international institutions.

After a career in commercial art and a tour of duty in the Pacific during World War II, the artist went into free-lance work and now lives and works in a rambling ranch style home and studio which he built himself near Rosedale.

Also on the program for the afternoon session will be Paul L. Raikes, account executive with Caldwell-Van Riper, Inc., of Indianapolis, who will present a critique of the broadcast arts entries in the contest. Don McCarty, vice president of the Advertising Club, will be chairman for the afternoon session.



SEAMON, SALTY



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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

**SALTY SEAMON FILM COMPLETED**—A new 16 mm, color, sound film, running 14 minutes, titled "Salty Seamon: Hoosier Artist," has been completed by the Indiana State University Audio-Visual Center. With Salty is Keith Hawkins of ISU, while filming was in progress. Linus Haller was the cameraman. Premiere showing will be Friday, Oct. 19, at the Brown County Art Gallery Association, Inc., Nashville, Ind., with continuous showings from 1 a.m. to 3 p.m., and visits with the artist at 11 a.m., 2 and 4 p.m. Information about the sale or rental of the film may be obtained from the A-V Center. Filming was at Salty's home and studio near Rosedale and in Brown County.

*Artists (W.V.)*



# ISU Documentary On Artist To Be Shown At Nashville

S OCT 16 1973

By GLADYS SELTZER  
Star Staff Writer

Premiere showings of the 16 mm. film "Salty Seamon: Hoosier Artist," a documentary embodying Seamon's philosophy of art and his approach to watercolor painting, will take place from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday at the Brown County Art Gallery in Nashville.

The 14-minute sound film in color was produced by the Audio-Visual Center at Indiana State University and filmed at his home and studio near Rosedale, on location in the Sugar Creek area where "Salty" has found much subject matter for his watercolors, and in the Brown County Art Gallery where many of his paintings are

displayed.

There will be continuous showings of the film and opportunity for those attending to visit the artist in the Great Hall at 11 a.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. Seamon was president of the Gallery during 1971-1972.

+ + +

He said the film shows him making preliminary sketches for his water colors and how he goes about this initial step and then takes the work through to its completion as a framed watercolor.

Describing himself as "simply a good natured guy who likes to get along with the world," "Salty" believes "you can't paint a tree until you know how a tree grows . . . you can't paint a

watercolor unless you know how to draw . . . if you draw it crooked it paints crooked."

"A picture should be painted so that others understand and enjoy it," he believes. "It should function like other arts. I see no reason to hang a glob of color with no drawing qualities or craftsmanship and expect the public to figure out what kind of mood the artist was in when he painted it. Who cares! That's giving up skill for stunts."

He said this is the first time he has done a documentary. He noted that for people of his generation, there is a "lot of nostalgia about the past" so the theme for the film shows how a Hoosier goes about finding "everyday subject matter with

no gimmick." His watercolors have a wealth of bridges, barns and other country scenes in Indiana which he has recorded "before it's all gone."

+ + +

Born in Gibson County in 1911, D. Omer Seamon spent 23 years as art director for the Thomson-Symon Co. and three years in the Army during World War II. Since 1954 he has freelanced as a commercial artist and produced the watercolor collection for which he is noted and for which the honest and more sincere subjects."

"Salty" and his wife, Polly, live in a wooded enclave in a house and studio which he built. He began the home in 1946 and had it pretty well completed by 1959. The studio, a short distance from the house, was begun in 1963 and now is completed.

"Salty" has won many award for his watercolors which include many pictures of the South Pacific islands where he was stationed during World War

II. He also has painted scenes in Australia, Mexico, the American Southwest, Puerto Rico, Cuba and Canada.

He will have 40 watercolors in a one-man show beginning Wednesday and continuing until Nov. 15 at Western Illinois University at McComb, Ill.

Community Affairs File

VIGG SOCIETY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

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ARTISTS  
(TH) ISU Honoring  
'Salty' Seamon  
This Sunday  
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS FILE

Indiana State University will honor Terre Haute freelance artist D. Omer "Salty" Seamon Sunday with the showing of a film about his life and a display of his paintings.

ISU Audio-Visual Center and Tirey Memorial Union Board are organizers of the special program scheduled for 2 to 5 p.m. Continuous showings of the 16-millimeter film "Salty Seamon: Hoosier Artist," will be in the TMU State Room. An opening tea for Seamon will be in the Heritage Lounge where his paintings will be on display. The public is invited without charge.

The film, produced by the Audio-Visual Center, focuses on the artist's philosophy of life, his realistic approach to watercolors and his practical ideas about art and money. Most of the footage was shot in Seamon's home and studio and at the Brown County Art Gallery where many of his paintings are displayed.

Headed by Keith Hawkins, ISU film production supervisor, the crew spent about two years shooting, assembling and editing the film.

Born, reared, and educated in Indiana, Seamon spent 20 years as art director for the Thomson-Symon Co. here before deciding to do free-lance work as a commercial artist. He lives in a ranch-style home and studio near Rosedale which he built himself.

A specialist in landscape watercolor, he includes among his paintings reproductions of famous landmarks in the Terre Haute area. Affiliated with the Hoosier Salon, Brown County Art Gallery Association, Hoosier Hills Art Guild, Indiana Artists, and Swope Art Gallery, he is represented in many permanent collections and his watercolors hang in national and international institutions.

His paintings will be on display weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Heritage Lounge until Dec. 21.

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Community Affairs File

VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA



# Salty Seamon: The Wabash Valley's Premier Artist

*Wabash Valley Focus July 1978*

In many of the Terre Haute banks you can find several sensitive, well painted water colors hanging on the walls. They vary in nature and content, but most of them are scenes of rural Indiana. In many local homes, you will find framed water color prints taken from the top of an OKT-Colson calendar. You can find this same work hanging on display at the Brown County Art Museum, and in the Tri Kappa art collection housed at Rose-Hulman Institute. These all come from the delicate brush of our well-known local artist, Omer D. Seamon — Salty to his friends.

"Most people want a 40 hour week; I want a 40 hour day," laughed the warm, slight 67 year old artist. He had paid into Social Security all his working life, but why stop painting when it gives him tremendous pleasure and brings so much happiness to the people fortunate enough to see his work. On a rural road that separates Vigo County from Rosedale, Salty built his split-level studio. Salty constructed the studio, with a large picture window that faces a meadow, only after building his own three bedroom ranch style home.

At 7:00 a.m. each day, he starts "puttering around," making frames, architectural renderings and preparing his latest pieces to be shipped off to the next show.

**"I feel fortunate to be living out here in the country. . ."**

"Any artist will work his heart out for a few compliments. I am never completely satisfied with my work; I always want to do better. My best work is the next piece I'm going to do," says Salty. His art personifies the happiness that exists in rural Indiana life by putting his love for nature in his work.

Born in Princeton, Indiana, Omer always knew that art was his aim in life. His mother crocheted and his father always admired and encouraged his young son's talent. When the parents wrote to their eldest son during World War I, young Omer would draw pictures across the end of the page. Salty reflected about being an artist by saying, "My best definition of an artist is that we all draw pictures when we're young, some keep it up and some don't." Going to work both before and after school ever since the seventh grade, he always tried to use his spare time creating and drawing. Although he had been hired to sweep the floors in a dry-goods shop, his employer soon learned that Omer could make a pretty good showcard." Soon he was



Nationally famous artist Omer "Salty" Seamon is shown here with one of his many beautiful pieces of work. Seamon's art portrays the beauty and the simplicity of rural Indiana in a way that is uniquely his own.



Salty Seamon begins his day at 7:00 a.m. putting together frames, architectural renderings and preparing his pieces for the next exhibit. His work has captured the hearts and souls of the people of Indiana.



making poster advertisements for the window. This led Salty upward to a job assisting a "window-trimmer." Lettering came easy to him but the added drawing took work, it never came "flowing" from his brush.

After graduating high school at 18, Omer was fortunate to land a job at Paramount Studios in Minneapolis where he worked along side twenty professional artists. All his spare time there was spent practicing drawing, asking questions of the older artists, and watching. Seamon feels that most artists are students as long as they live since school can only teach the basics. Salty, however, always had the intense desire to improve his work and make it communicate what he saw and felt. Many people are born with the necessary talent but do little with it. It must be worked at, and it usually will take a person's entire life time to truly develop it by always studying. Studying what? Studying other artist's work, studying nature, studying structure of animals, objects, and people.

Salty was at Paramount for two years when the depression of 1931 hit. Omer, like millions of others at the time, was out on the streets looking for a job. He got a job at Thomson-Symon of Terre Haute, coming here on a two-week trial. The two weeks stretched and he remained with the firm until 1954 (except for 3½ years when he was in the service). At Thomson-Symon Salty made printed matter for bulletin board displays. It required that the artist draw many different things that he had hardly had any acquaintance with. "On a job like that, you must draw many things you wouldn't ordinarily attempt to draw. You must learn the structure of an article, its shape, and its shadows." His spare time was once again spent studying on his own and collecting a file of pictures and photographs to help him.

Salty believes that artists must learn to be more business oriented. Seamon says "people feel that an artist can do a task easily, therefore, he ought to produce the art quickly and with little or no cost. All an artist has to offer is his skill which came about after years of hard work and training." Seamon adds that because the artist enjoys his job, most people feel that he ought to work for little or no money. Salty feels that it is not as bad as it has been in the past with the plight of the artist being somewhat improved. Art is a business to Salty. "I feel fortunate to be living out here in the country, doing what I like to do. The roof doesn't leak, I'm paying my bills, what else is there? I live comfortably and have no complaints."

Salty worked hard to achieve his prestige. In an area this size, an artist must do many things to be able to support himself. Salty still renders architectural drawings for Shelton Hanning, John Curry and some out of town architects. In addition, the National Guard has developed a tradition of presenting a Seamon montage to retiring guardsmen. It resembles "This is Your Life" with a portrait of the honored guardsman in the center. Around the portrait are several small scenes depicting aspects of the retiree's life. "It is always fun," says Seamon. "The guardsmen have no idea



Salty Seamon is one of the Wabash Valley's premier artists. States Seamon "Any artist will work his heart out for a few compliments. I am never completely satisfied with my work; I always want to do better."

what achievements will be recorded until he sees the painting."

There is a thin line between fine art and commercial art, but to Salty Seamon it's all a matter of definitions. "In the past artists would paint for the church and the old masters would pick up the tab. You might call that commercial art" says Salty. One must ask the question, though, if an artist makes a painting and someone sees it, buys it and prints it, is it commercial or fine art? To Seamon, the label makes little difference.

But commercial art is a tremendous vehicle by which young artists might maintain themselves while they develop their style and reputation. Salty adds, "Commercial art pays the bills and in your spare time, you can develop your style. Unfortunately, it takes half a life time before an artist is established and recognized."

Most artists are concerned about what will happen to their work after they are gone. But Seamon didn't seem to be concerned about this. "Well," he smiles, "my water colors are of places people will want to remember. But I'm not too concerned about what happens after I'm gone. I've had my fun doing them."

We who have the privilege of viewing Salty Seamon's work can get a sweet feeling of nostalgia looking at the simple

lines and sparkling colors of his paintings. One can feel the honest effort that Seamon puts into his work. He doesn't claim it as fine art, yet the hundreds of people who are fortunate enough to have a Seamon print or original on their wall would quickly label it as fine art. This art is sincere, technically well executed and well presented. Any person who appreciates art can get immense pleasure from just glancing over his work or viewing it over a period of years. It is something that will not grow stale to the eyes.

When will Salty Seamon retire? "When they nail the lid down," said Salty with a big laugh. This active camper, nature lover, painter, and builder of frames has a great many water colors to go before this ever happens. In the meantime, the Brown County Art Museum and many other galleries will be fortunate in receiving his many new paintings. Many of his buyers come to his studio while others buy through the galleries. His reputation is well established. Salty sums up his future by saying, "I see no reason for not coming out here every morning and doing something that you can hardly keep from doing." Vigo County is fortunate in being reflected in the skilled eyes and paint brush of Salty Seamon.

—Sarah Smith



# Seamon Set to Present Show at Rose-Hulman

D. Omer "Salty" Seamon, Terre Haute watercolor artist whose works have won national acclaim, will present a one-man show at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology Sunday, Sept. 28 through Monday, Oct. 6.

The show features Seamon's favorite subject — the natural beauty of his native Hoosier state — and will open with a reception by invitation Sunday evening. The public is invited to view the show during the hours of operation of Hulman Memorial Union (8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily) beginning, Sept. 29.

Born in Gibson County in 1911, his creative spark led him to take a home study course from an art school in Minneapolis, Minn., while he was still in high school. This study led to a job with Paramount Studios in that city.

He came to Terre Haute in the 1930s to become art director of a firm making 24-sheet posters. He later served three and one-half years in the army during World War II and in the early 1950s became a freelance artist.

Seamon has an insatiable appetite for work and painting Indiana and finds fulfillment of both in the seclusion of a studio he built himself in the hilly and woody natural setting of northern

thern Vigo County.

The artist is a rare craftsman who excels in design and detail. Keenly interested in matters of precision and accurate depiction of details he says of painting itself, "A picture will never be painted better than it is drawn or better than the knowledge of the subject. A picture should be painted so that others understand and enjoy it. It should function like other arts.

"I see no reason to hang a glob of color with no drawing qualities of craftsmanship and expect the public to figure out what kind of mood the artist was in when it painted it. Who cares! That's giving up skill for stunts."

Seamon completes as many as 100 watercolors per year and does many commercial jobs such as renderings of proposed buildings and related paintings.

How does he accomplish so much?

The 30 paintings in the current show at Rose-Hulman include a half dozen of the Rose-Hulman campus as well as scenes of the lake at Terre Haute's Deming Park, the Nashville shops, an Indiana saw mill, New Goshen Homestead and a number of other Hoosier scenes.

TS SEP 28 1975



**HOOSIER ARTIST**—D. Omer "Salty" Seamon, local watercolorist whose works hang in institutions across the country and in many foreign lands, is shown with a portion of a show at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology. His favorite subject is his native Indiana and its natural beauty.

Community Affairs File

House of Photography Photo.

Community Affairs File

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**FESTIVAL ARTIST** - D. Omer "Salty" Seaman is pictured as he puts the finishing touches to his watercolor painting of this Wabash River scene which will be raffled off at 4 p.m. Sunday, June 6, during the Banks-of-the-Wabash Festival. Salty is donating the painting, and all proceeds will be used to help defray Festival expenses. (Photo by Kadel)

## Seaman Watercolor To Aid BOW Festival

D. Omer "Salty" Seaman, local artist noted for his watercolor paintings, will demonstrate watercolor painting techniques at 2 p.m. Sunday, June 6, in the art show tent during the Banks-of-the-Wabash Festival opening May 29 in Fairbanks Park.

The artist has donated a large watercolor he has painted to be raffled off. All receipts from the raffle will be used to help defray Festival expenses.

Raffle tickets will be available at the Festival office in the Terre Haute House and in the art show tent during the Festival, or from committee members. Mrs. Robert Payton and Mrs. Parker Shields are in charge of the raffle.

Drawing for the picture will take place at 4 p.m. Sunday, June 6, in the art show tent.

Seaman, a Hoosier-born artist, lives in a rural Vigo county home which he built. He is affiliated with the Hoosier Salon, Brown County Art Gallery Association, Indiana Artists and the Sheldon Swope Art Gallery. His watercolors are displayed in national and international institutions.

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*Seamon - Paris Artists (I.M.)*  
*10-31-77*

## Rosedale Artist In Show Here

Members of the Bicentennial Art Center will welcome back an old friend for the November exhibit, D. Omer (Salty) Seamon from nearby Rosedale, Ind., who will return with his display of water colors for area residents to enjoy once again. His exhibit at the center last year proved to be one of the most popular with the public.

Seamon's pictures, which feature the things he knows and likes best—covered bridges, old barns, and scenes of the changing seasons around his Indiana home—will be open to the public Tuesday and will extend throughout the month.

A reception for Mr. Seamon and his wife, Marjorie, will be held Sunday, from 2 to 4 p.m. with the public invited to come and visit with the Hoosier artist. Committee chairmen for the show are Mrs. Wayne Zimmerly, Mrs. Edward Day, and Miss Jayne Bittner.

Seamon began his life as an artist in Minnesota painting advertising posters, after living in southern Indiana as a child, and since 1935 has lived in the woods north of Terre Haute, where he built his own studio. He has roamed most of Indiana looking for suitable scenes for his watercolor brush, and using artistic technique developed at a commercial drawing board instead of in a classroom, he has put an estimated 700 Hoosier pictures on paper. His paintings of covered bridges and old barns, both of which are passing from the current scene, he considers a small contribution to recording history.

"I like rural Indiana," he says. "I was born on a farm and lived there when I was a kid. Down to earth things, nature particularly—I never get tired of looking at it."

Seven days a week, Seamon is up at 6 a.m. when he reads for 30 minutes, the only time of day he can keep awake and remember what he reads, he says. Following breakfast with his wife, he begins his day in the studio by 7 a.m., unless he is delivering finished work or is on a photographing safari.

His modest beginning in the art world began in the seventh grade when he won second place in a poster contest and became enthused about art. While working as a window trimmer in Evansville, he took a home study course from a school in Minneapolis, which later led to a job there with Paramount Studios. Later he came to Terre Haute as art director for a poster-making firm. Following three years in the Army in World War II, he returned to Parke County and Married Marjorie, a widow with one child.

She often accompanies him on picture-taking trips. "When there's a fresh snow, we'll grab a couple of cameras, and maybe a sandwich, and go out all day. I work on the theory if you take 50 pictures and get one good one, you're lucky."

Back in the studio, Seamon used his photographs as a guide, adding his own touches to produce a finished piece of work. His wife, acts as an occasional critic.

Seamon says, "She'll come in and I'm working on something and she'll say that's crooked. I figure if it looks crooked to her it's going to look crooked to everyone else who views it, so I take a good look and change it."

Seamon is a member of the Hoosier Salon, Hoosier Hills Art Guild, Indiana Artists, the Swope Gallery and the Brown County Art Gallery Association. Numerous of his works hang as part of permanent gallery collections and he was exhibited several one-man shows.

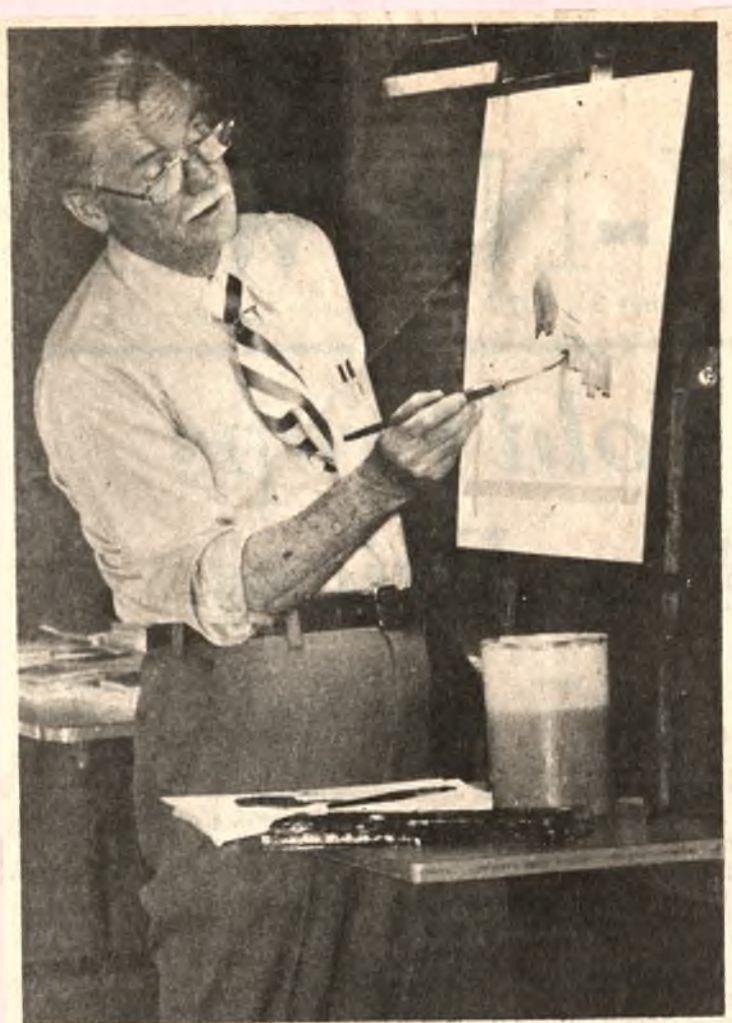
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*D. Omer Seaman*



Ts JAN 11 1981

# TH First report features Seamon art

Artists (T. 11)  
Community Affairs File



## Sketch chosen

Artist "Salty" Seamon, right, holds one of his preliminary sketches of the Markle House, chosen to be painted for the cover of the annual report of the

Terre Haute First National Bank. With him, from the left, are Bill Llewellyn and Ed Schulz, both of Woodburn Printing Co., and John Perry of the bank.

A depiction of historic Markle House by area artist D. Omer Seamon will be featured on the cover of Terre Haute First National Bank's 1980 report.

Purported to be one of the best built and in best condition of Vigo County's early brick homes, the historic structure located at 4900 Mill Dam Road, will be painted by Seamon for the annual report as the house appeared in the early days when activity flourished at the nearby Markle Mill. The mill stood east of North Terre Haute on Otter Creek until destroyed by fire in 1938. It was constructed in 1816 through the efforts of Abraham Markle, an early Indiana settler who dreamed of building a mill on desirable Indiana land.

With a history as interesting as the grounds on which it was constructed, the Markle House was built across the street from the mill in 1848 by Frederick Markle, one of Abraham's two sons.

Not only did the structure house the ten children of Frederick Markle, but it served as a lodge for weary stagecoach travellers and as a training ground for what was known as the "cornstalk militia" — because of a shortage of guns, men used corn stalks while preparing for Civil War drills.

The Markle House is best remembered, however, as a station along the infamous Underground Railroad, whereby sympathetic Northerners aided smuggled slaves from the South to lives of freedom.

Owned by the Vigo County Historical Society since 1977, the House was accepted in 1979 for listing in the National Register, which provides an official inventory of local, state, and federal sites having "significance in the development of our nation's heritage."

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# Welcome Mat *artists (T.H.)* Out at Rustic T FEB 27 1974 Art Gallery

By HOWARD STEVENS  
Tribune State Editor

NASHVILLE, Ind. (Special) — A sure sign of spring—the annual spring art exhibit at the Brown County Art Gallery—is under way in this rustic hill country.

Represented in the new spring exhibit are three Terre Haute artists who are members of the Brown County Association—Mrs. Louise B. Hansen, 714 S. 34th St.; Floyd W. Bombard, 54 S. 26th St., and Omer Seamon, whose home and studio is near Rosedale.

The gallery is now open for visitors, seven days a week from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m., eastern standard time.

An open house and reception took place last weekend and 350 guests attended and were greeted by the artists and members of the board of directors. Spring floral arrangements were displayed in all rooms of the gallery. Coffee and tea cakes were served under the direction of Mrs. Bimi Burch, social chairman.

A watercolor of the gallery by Seamon was recently presented to the Association by the artist and his wife, Polly, depicting the gallery in winter, with a snow-covered rail fence in the foreground. Seamon has served as president of the board and, for many years, as an active member of the board.

Out of the ashes of a fire which destroyed the original gallery in 1966, the new gallery is designed and dedicated to insure the future of Brown County as a center of fine art. During the 1973 season, more than 30,000 visitors viewed the handsome gallery and its exhibits.

Located along SR 135, the gallery is closed during the month of January but reopened Valentine Day. C. R. Peckham, executive secretary, promises an exciting spring show.

"We have enjoyed an excellent response from area art lovers. We expect many more Wabash Valley visitors to the gallery this year," he says.

One thing which is expected to attract additional visitors to the gallery is a gasoline shortage, Peckham believes, will restrict tourists to Hoosier scenic spots. Another attraction here is picturesque Nashville and its unusual shops and pioneer craft displays.

Last year, 50 artists showed their paintings at the gallery. An even larger number are expected to exhibit paintings this year.

Throughout the year, the gallery is open to student groups and weekly sketch classes for adults. Periodic exhibits of art and sculpture from other Midwest galleries are also featured at the cultural center.



Artists (74)

Community Affairs File

Weekend Messenger 11/14/87

THE WEEKEND MESSENGER

Omer D. "Salty" Seamon didn't go looking for fame. But fame found him, the Wabash Valley's most popular water colorist. These examples show his desire for authentic detail of landmarks no longer in existence.



Rural barnyard scene



Old YMCA





The artist at work in his studio.





**Union Station**



**Wiley High School**



# Seamon, pals love sittin' and sippin'

<sup>NOV 29 1985</sup>  
Trio's been  
getting together  
for 50 years

By George W. Wardell  
Tribune-Star Staff Reporter

For those who are really not sure what friendship is, a few hours with the gathering of three men at Omer Seamon's bucolic retreat near the Parke-Vigo County Line Road would be enlightening.

The trio, Sam Rees, Norman "Sandy" Sandefur and "Salty" Seamon have been meeting on Thanksgiving for a half-century. It all began in 1936 when the three went on a Thanksgiving bird-hunting trip. Following the hunt they gathered for some libation and a recapitulation of the day. With the exception of the war years, they've been doing it ever since.

The group gave up hunting a while back, and as Salty put it, "We found out a few years ago that we didn't have to tramp around in the fields all day to have this respite at the end of the day, so we cut out the tramping and we do more sittin' and sippin' now."

"We are going to keep doing this until we get it right," Salty added.

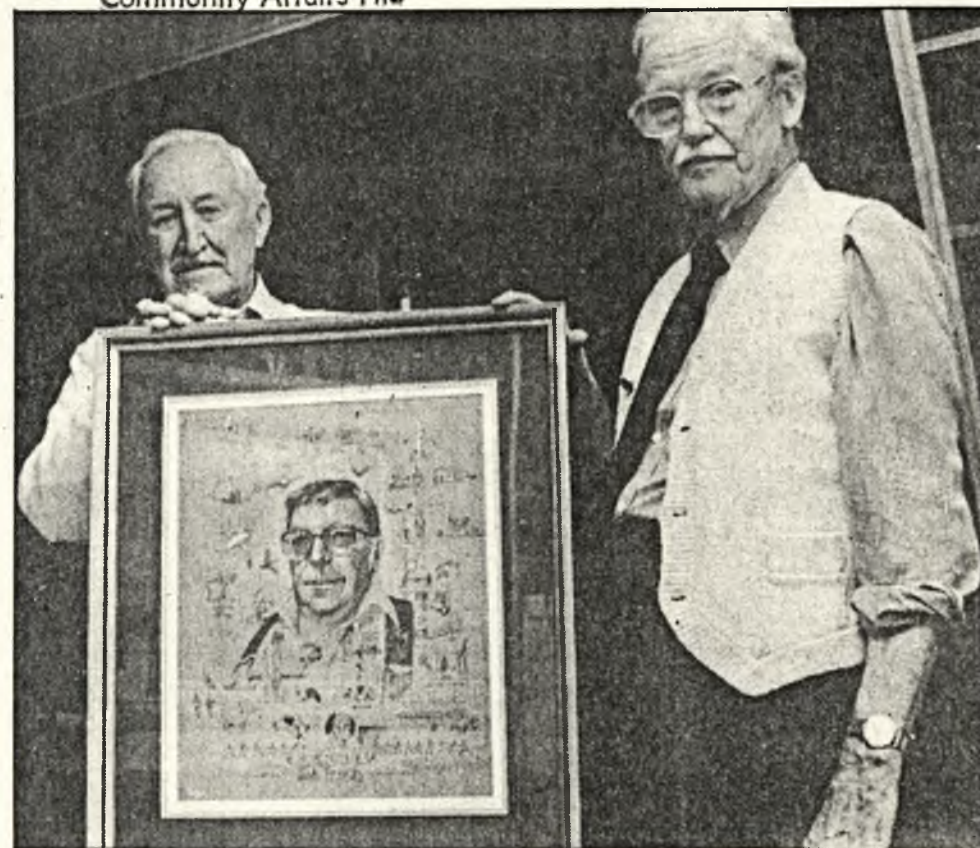
The respect, admiration and love the men have for each other is obvious.

"In all this time, I can't remember any of us ever being disturbed with each other," said Sandy, who, at 65, is the pup of the trio. "We have a genuine love for each other and we would never do anything that would hurt each other."

This doesn't preclude a prank now and then — not at the expense of the victim's dignity, but always to lend humor to their association.

Humor they have in abundance.

Salty offered, with a twinkle in his eyes



Tribune-Star/Jim Avelis

## Three's company: Rees, Seamon hold painting of Sandefur.

"that the life span of a horse and a dog should be the same as a man, and the life span of a woman should be about the same as a horse. That way a man could have a dog and horse for life and a new woman every 12 years or so."

All three are years younger than their age.

The dean of the group, Sam, who lives in Bloomington, is a mere 83, while Salty tilts the calendar at 75. They take as much

delight in being the victim of a prank as they do in being the perpetrator.

Sam recounted one prank:

"Some years ago, about 1941 I think, we were on our way back to the car after a day's hunting. Walking along a field, five hawks suddenly darted out from the woods and we up and shot at them, killing two.

"After we got home, we sent Salty out to get some liquid refreshment while Sandy and I cleaned the day's bag. We decided to

clean one of the hawks and fix it for Salty and mix it with the quail we cleaned for our dinner.

"In the meantime, Salty on the way out of the drive hit a rabbit. The rabbit was only stunned and Salty sneaked back to the house and turned the bunny loose in the room we were in, raising a ruckus which added to the confusion.

"Salty later returned with the 'medicinal alcohol' and we began to get a bit mellow. We prepared the birds for eating and somehow the hawk got lost in the shuffle.

"We never did find out who ate the hawk."

Sandy of Greenwood chipped in with a story about a friend who said he wanted to die looking at the rear of a bird dog on point.

"He did just that. One day he and his son were hunting and their setter went on point and as the man walked up behind the dog, he fell over and died of a heart attack."

Sam also tells a story about a man named Shorty he met by chance in an area near White Lake.

"He was a huge man and an accommodating one. He lent us the use of his home while we hunted and finally took us where the birds were, because we weren't finding any.

"Went back to the same place a few years later and found the place still the same, but Shorty had died some time before so maybe things weren't really the same. It made me very sad."

When the trio disbands its annual meeting, the closing toast is always the same, no matter who makes it:

"There are two things I love the best, one is a woman and the other is a horse. When I die, may my skin be dressed and made into a saddle so that after death, I may rest between the two things I love best."

It was clear that the men regarded this meeting as a special time. As Sam put it, "We don't have too many of these meetings left and we treasure every one that we are allowed to attend."